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United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

Office of the Circuit Executive · 95 7th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 · (415) 355-8800 · (415) 355-8901 Fax

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: David J. Madden (415) 355-8930

Circuit Judge Diarmuid O’Sconnlain to Chair Committee on International Judicial Relations

SAN FRANCISCO – Ninth Circuit Judge Diarmuid F. O’Sconnlain of Portland, Oregon, has been appointed chair of the Committee on International Judicial Relations of the Judicial Conference of the United States. The three-year appointment was made by Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr., of the Supreme Court of the United States and is effective October 1, 2010.

The Committee on International Judicial Relations helps establish and expand the rule of law throughout the world. It was formed in 1993 to respond to increasing demand from newly emerging democracies and developing countries for information about judicial independence, legal traditions and effective court administration in the United States. Assisted by staff of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts in Washington, D.C., the committee is currently involved in activities in Africa, Asia and the Pacific Basin, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, Europe, and Eurasia.

“I am deeply honored to receive this appointment,” said Judge O’Sconnlain, who has served on the committee since 2009. “The committee is dedicated to fostering the rule of law by working with judiciaries throughout the world. I look forward to continuing our efforts to achieve this goal.”

In addition to its own initiatives, the Committee on International Judicial Relations works with the U.S. State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. Department of Justice, the World Bank, the Federal Judicial Center, other committees of the Judicial Conference of the United States, and various non-governmental organizations. It also works with the Library of Congress in the Open World Program for jurists from Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan.

Ninth Circuit judges to have previously served as chair of the committee are Senior Circuit Judge Cynthia Holcomb Hall of Pasadena, and former District Judge Fern M. Smith of San Francisco.

Nominated by President Reagan, Judge O'Scannlain has served on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit since 1986 and ranks fifth in seniority among the court's 25 active judges. He maintains chambers in the Pioneer Courthouse in Portland.

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals hears appeals of cases decided by federal trial courts and certain executive branch administrative agencies in nine western states and two Pacific Island jurisdictions. The court, which reported 12,223 appeals filed in 2009, convenes monthly in Pasadena, San Francisco and Seattle, every other month in Portland, and periodically at other locations.

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